

4-1958

Churches of Christ Salute You with a Herald of Truth: April Report and May Sermons

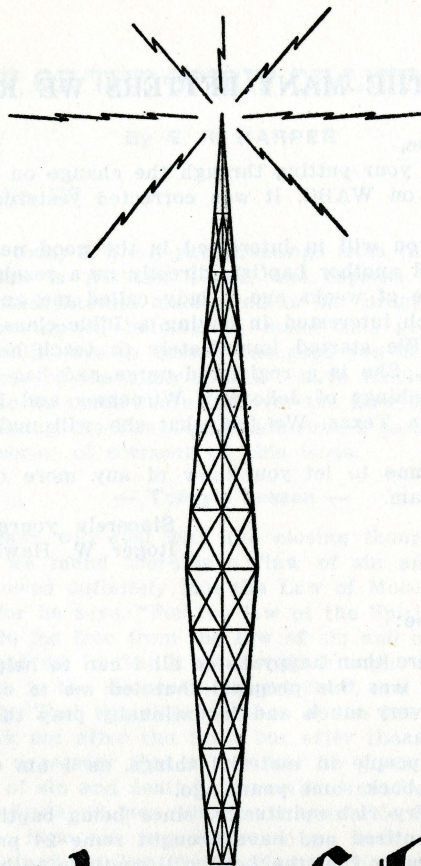
Herald of Truth

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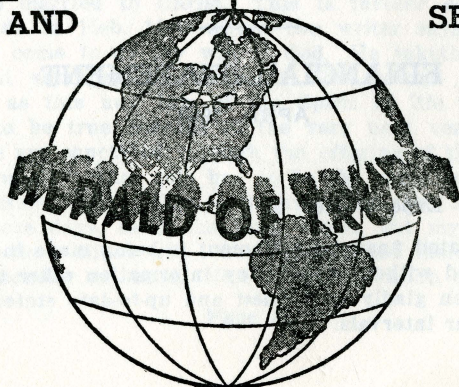


Churches of Christ

III
SALUTE YOU

APRIL
REPORT AND

MAY
SERMONS--1958



TWO OF THE MANY LETTERS WE RECEIVE

Dear Brother Reese,

We appreciate your putting through the change on our phone number as announced on WABC. It was corrected yesterday for the first time.

I know that you will be interested in the good news since I last wrote you. We had another baptism directly as a result of the Herald of Truth. A couple of weeks ago a lady called me and told me that she was very much interested in having a Bible class as well as attending services. We started immediately to teach her and baptized her within a week. She is a registered nurse and has had some background of the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses and her father is a staunch Witness in Texas. We feel that she will make a wonderful Christian.

We will continue to let you know of any more converts made through the program.

Sincerely yours,
Roger W. Hawley

Dear Brother Reese:

I would be more than happy to do all I can to help the Herald of Truth Program. It was this program that led me to our Lord, And I love the program very much and I continually pray that many others will be led as I was.

We are poor people in material things, as I am disabled on account of a broken back some years ago.

But we are very rich spiritually, since being baptized into Christ in 1954, I have Baptized and have brought some 24 precious souls to Christ. It is our prayer that the Lord will continue to bless the Herald of Truth program until Jesus comes for His own.

I would love to hear from you.

In His precious name and in His service,
your brother in Christ.
Freeman N. Johnson

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

APRIL 1958

Receipts	\$17,751.06
Expenditures	16,391.70
Receipts Exceed Expenditures by	\$ 1,359.36

This abbreviated financial statement is being made in order to have the report printed without delay. Any information other than these figures will be given gladly on request and up-to-date statements will be printed at regular intervals.

THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE IN CHRIST

By E. R. HARPER

Radio Sermon No. 327

May 4, 1958

My friends today I bring you greetings from the church of Christ at Highland here in Abilene, Texas, and express to you our thanks for your continued interest manifested in our program by your letters and your fellowship in helping to make this great work possible. Eternity alone will have to answer the good you have helped to make possible. Because of the many letters I have received in which there seemed to me to be much confusion over the Law of Moses, especially that part containing the Ten Commandments, I have chosen to discuss with you this series of sermons on this issue.

— Today's Lesson —

Today's lesson will deal with the closing thought in my last discussion. In it we found there is a "law of sin and death" (Romans 8:1-4). Paul showed definitely that the Law of Moses could not free us from this law for he says, "For the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and of death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." This being true it became necessary that a new law be given that could free us from this "law of sin and death." If man had not been freed from this law of sin and death all men who are accountable for their sins would have been lost. Now you may desire to go back under this old law, which law contained the Ten Commandments, but one thing remember: When you do you must be eternally and forever lost for you will still be under that law of sin and death. This new law, this "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" was not, nor could it be in force during the existence of the law of Moses, hence Paul declared in Romans 7:1-4 that we became dead to and freed from this law in order that we should be married to Christ. This is further confirmed by the statement made in Heb. 10:9 where the writer says concerning the Christ, "Lo, I come to do thy will O God. He taketh away the first, that he might establish the second." This second will referred to is that same as this new law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. I know this to be true because in the very next verse he says "By which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." That this had to be the same as this "new law" let us read verses 15-22, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there

is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." This is a new, this is a living way in contrast to the old which meant death.

— The Comparison —

In Romans 8:1-4 he speaks of the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus"; here in Hebrews 10:20 he speaks of a new and living way by Christ Jesus. They must be the same! In Romans 8:2 we had the law of sin and death that held us bound to the guilt of sin. But this new law is a law of life in Christ Jesus and frees us from our sins. In Hebrews 10:17,18 he shows that by the sacrifice of Christ we now actually may be freed from this curse of sin and our sins and our iniquities are remembered no more; that after Christ entered into heaven we actually enjoyed remission of sins; that after His death we can now be freed from our sins, from this dreadful law that demanded death for sin. We may be freed from it because Christ died for us and He has become our sacrifice, our substitute, our sin-bearer and we may now cast all our cares on Him, and the Father will free us from all our sins, from this curse of sin that hung over the human race for four thousand years.

Strange creature, this man God has created! Knowing that under the law of Moses, under the Ten Commandments, which was a part of this law, man was cursed by being hopelessly bound unto death, yet he struggles to free himself from this "law of the Spirit of life in Christ" by which he may be freed from the curses of "sin and death" and tries to plunge himself back into the very throes of death; he fights to live under a law and during an age when sins could not be forgotten. He even tries desperately to go back under such a period for the establishment of the church to which he wishes to belong; to go back under this regime of "Sin and Death" for the plan of salvation by which he is to be saved!

— Christ Had To Die —

Can't you see, my friends, will you not see, that the death of Christ had to take place if we were to be free from this curse of death? Can't you see if Christ had never come to earth, had He never died; had He never shed His blood, had He never gone back to the Father there could have been no freedom from sins to the point of "remembering them no more"? Is it possible you can't see this? Is it possible you can't see that before the death of Christ you could not have this new law, the "law of the Spirit of life" freeing us from the "law of sin and death"? Can't you see that Christ had to die that the Law of Moses be fulfilled? Can't you understand that so long as the Law of Moses lasted, the Law of Christ (Galatians 6:2) could not be active, for then you would have had two conflicting laws at the same given time to the world, the one offering animal sacrifice and animal blood for the sins of the people, while the other had Christ as the sacrifice and His blood shed for the remission of sins. Can't you see this?

That this being true then all theories that claim to have originated before the death of Christ by which salvation or absolute freedom from sins could be enjoyed just have to be wrong and that you will have to give them up? Can't you see that all religious institutions that would claim to have originated before the offering of Christ would have had only the blood of bulls and goats in them? If for no other reason, the Law of Moses and then Ten Commandments would have been forced to cease because they were consecrated by the blood of animals and not by the blood of Christ (Hebrews chapter 9). What we have today has been consecrated by Christ, as we read to you a moment ago from Hebrews 10:20. This is why we have to come this side of the death of Christ for the beginning of the church, for the beginning of the kingdom of Christ, for the new testament, and for the plan of salvation in the name of Christ. All these are dedicated by the blood of Christ, not by the blood of a bull, nor of a goat. Paul just says in so many words in Hebrews 9:16,17, "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." Christ was and is the testator, therefore He had to die for His testament to be in force. Now friends, go back under the blood of bulls and goats, go back before the testament of Christ was in effect, go back before Christ died for your sins if you wish: take your precious children this route if you wish to do them this way, they are yours; but I beg of you, open your eyes, unstop your ears, soften your hearts, and listen to the truth that you may be freed from that awful and dreadful law of "sin and death" by the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" which law became effective after Christ died and went back to His Father in heaven (Hebrews 10:15-22). We just have to come this side of the cross, because Christ had to become our sin-bearer, our sacrifice, our only hope from the freedom from sins, and from the curse of the law because of its weakness in the flesh. Let me forever remove any doubt that may be in your minds about our not being freed from all things pertaining to the law of Moses, which law included the Ten Commandments. In Galatians 3:10-13 the Spirit by Paul says, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Just a moment here: When he said "all things contained in the book of the law" did this eliminate the Ten Commandments or did "all things" include them? Were the Ten Commandments contained in this "book of the law"? Would any man dare say that all that was contained in the "book of the law" was just the ceremonies of the law? This can't be answered! Now verse 11 says "that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith; but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." In verse 24

Paul says "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." Do we mean to say here that only the ceremonial part of the law, as some wish to call it, brought them to Christ? Do you mean to eliminate the Ten Commandments from that part of the law that brought men to Christ? If so then why, pray tell me, was the Ten Commandment part of the law given? Here we see that the old law, that of Moses, including the Ten Commandments, was given to bring man to Christ. Christ is the dividing line. When He died He nailed all this old regime to the cross, took it out of the way (Colossians 2:14) making way for this new law, this "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" by which man may be freed from the curse of the law and from the "law of sin and death." My friends, this just has to be the truth of your Bible.

— What is This Law of The Spirit of Life? —

You are now ready to ask, "Brother Harper, What is this Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that man must have to be freed from this horrible curse of sin? This understood, together with the function of this new law, and much of our troubles would be ended. We must know what this law is by what it does and how it operates.

— Common Examples —

First, this law frees us from the law of sin that demands our death. But just what does that mean? The context of Romans, chapter 8, verse 1 through 4 will reveal the meaning. In verse on Paul says "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Hence this new law freed man from condemnation by bringing man into Christ. In verse 3 we read, "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Here this new law is to free us from the condemnation of sin, it is to bring us freedom from sins. By this new law we are made alive, we become sons of God, and heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, for Paul says in verse 13 "but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." In verse 14 he says "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," and verse 15 reads "for ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Finally in verse 17 the Spirit through Paul declares "if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." All these are in this same chapter under this law of the Spirit. Hence this "law of the Spirit or life in Christ Jesus" makes us free from sin, makes us sons of God, makes us heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. By this new law of that "Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" we are saved. That is how simple it all is.

— Similar Passages —

Let us now look at other passages and illustrations which carry with them the same meaning as Romans 8:14 and by comparison we

shall be better able to convince you that our message today has to be true. In Romans 3:24-27 Paul declares, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay but by the law of faith." Here we find the law of faith, through the blood of Christ, brings forgiveness of sins that are past; not the forgiveness of all future sins, as the "impossibility of apostacy" advocates claim, but remission of sins that are past! Hence this law of faith does exactly what this law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus does. They must be the same law, therefore, because in the eighth chapter of this same letter he tells them of this new law and he certainly did not mean to have two different laws in function at the same time to the people. When we find what the people at Rome did to be saved we shall know what this new law is.

James 1:21, 22

James in chapter one and verses 21, 22 says, "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls." Is this a different plan given by which they were to receive salvation or is this the same as this "law of the Spirit of life," the same as the "law of faith"? They all bring the same blessing, freedom from this law of sin and death, for by them your soul is able to be saved. They must be the same for in verse 25 of this same chapter James says, "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." What is this "perfect law of liberty"? Is it a different law or is it the same "law of the Spirit of life" of Romans 8:14, is it the same as that of Romans 3:24-27? Friends, they have to be the same for they bring identical blessings.

John 6:63; 1 Cor. 4:15

That this law of the Spirit of life must include the word of the Lord, the gospel of Christ I invite your attention to the words of our Master and to Paul's. In John 6:63 Christ said "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Now this being true, this almost universal idea, that the word of God is a dead letter and cannot accomplish the results desired of the Lord, is foreign to the truth. The words of Christ "are spirit, and they are life," Christ being our witness, and could we have a better? Here again are the words that free us from death. What Christ gives to us must therefore be this new law that frees us from sin and from the curse of spiritual death. Now in I Corinthians 4:15 Paul declares "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many

fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me." Here again the word of God, the gospel, is able to accomplish that which man needs and which the law of Moses was unable to do. Since the words of Christ, the gospel of Christ, may and can bring to us the same blessings as this "law of the Spirit" we must conclude that they are one and the same. Another thing we must consider is: the New Testament, the New Covenant, Christ's will, and this New Law of the Spirit cannot be separated, the one from the other. When man meets the terms of this testament, this covenant, this will, when he obeys the gospel or submits to this law of the Spirit of life, he receives the same blessings. Therefore when man obeys the gospel of Christ he fulfills all that is required of him in this new law, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. He has salvation, remission of sins, forgiveness of sins, is freed from the curse of the law of sin and death, and is a child of God, an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ. He likewise is a member of the body of Christ, which is the church (Acts 2:47; Ephesians 1:22, 23). We must therefore conclude that this gospel of Christ is this new law to be given by which man is to be freed from that law that demanded death for sins. The sacrifice of Christ for sins is now ours to claim and to enjoy if we will but obey His gospel given in His Great Commission. In it He said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. But he that believeth not shall be damned." Peter said in Acts 2:38, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," and those in Rome, who Paul declared had been made free from this law of sin and death, had been "buried in baptism" to rise to "walk in newness of life." This you will have to do as a penitent believer in Christ for this is that part of this law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that brings man into the absolute forgiveness of sins and nothing else will. In my next lesson I shall discuss with you the subject: How does this law of the Spirit of Life function; how does man receive the remission of his sins by Christ? Will you not today obey your Lord? May the Lord bless you is my prayer in His blessed name.

FREEDOM IN CHRIST

By E. R. HARPER

Radio Sermon No. 328

May 11, 1958

My good friends we certainly would be ungrateful were we not to thank all of you for your letters and your continued interest in seeing that this program continues to be presented to the peoples of this earth who need to learn of the gospel of Christ and its saving

power in bringing people to their Lord. Words fail us in a time like this when we would love to be able to tell you just how very deeply we do appreciate your Christian fellowship for years in such a marvelous effort to get the truth to those who are kind enough to listen. Eternity alone will be able to reveal the tremendous good that we as Christians, working together with our Lord, have been able to accomplish in this generation. Thousands shall praise their Lord for all eternity because of this program. It must go on.

— Brief Review —

As I begin the discussion of the subject announced, "Freedom In Christ" may I call your attention to some things already discussed in this series? I have proven that the "Law of Moses" was given to the Jew only, Deut. 5:2,3. That it was to last until the "seed should come" which was Christ, Gal. 3:16; that Christ "nailed it to the cross" and therefore "took it out of the way," Col. 2:14. I proved that the "Ten Commandments" were a part of this law of Moses, Romans 7:7 and hence was no longer binding as the "Ten Commandments." I showed why the Ten Commandments had to cease: they did not go far enough to deal with the purposes and intents of the heart. Stopping short here, it was not a perfect law in that it dealt many times with only the overt act, Exodus 20:13-16. This law had to cease because the "priesthood changed," Heb. 7:12. The old law was made for an imperfect priesthood; the Priesthood of Christ being perfect there had to be a perfect law given to meet the needs of this new priesthood, Heb. 7:12; Heb. 7:19-28; James 1:25. I proved that this old law had to cease because it could not make the people perfect; it had only the blood of animals; could not therefore bring about the forgiveness of sins and necessitated the coming of Christ to die and shed His blood for the remission of man's sin, Heb. 10:1-4; Matt. 26:28; and I John 1:7-9. The last of these to be mentioned was the fact that the "Law of Moses," which included the Ten Commandments, had to cease because it could not free man from the curse of the "Law of Sin and Death," Romans 8:2. That man must be freed from that law no one denies I am sure. That was the reason for our last lesson on "The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus," Rom. 8:1-4. In this I pointed out that this New Law of Romans 8:1-2 made man free from the "law of sin and death"; that this law was the same as the "law of faith" in Romans 3:27; that it was the same as the "perfect law of liberty," James 1:25; that it must be the same as the "engrafted word" of James 1:21; and finally that this New Law of Romans 8:2 had to be the same as the "gospel of Christ," Mark 16:15 and Romans 1:16. The reason given for these all being the same was: They all produce the same results and provide the same blessings; namely, the "forgiveness of sins"; "remission of sins"; and "life eternal" not one of which could have been enjoyed unless man had been freed from this "law of sin and death." Our conclusion then was and had to be: If man obeys the gospel of Christ; receives the "engrafted word"

he has been made free from this "law of sin and death" for things equal to the same thing are equal to each other. This cannot be refuted! We conclude therefore, and justly so, that one must come to this side of the death of Christ for the establishment of His church; for the beginning of the plan of salvation in His name by which men are saved and freed from this awful curse of the "law of sin and death." All churches and doctrines operating before the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" of Rom. 8:2 had written upon them the curse of "death." From all such man had need to be freed.

— Heart of Lesson —

This brings us to the heart of our lesson for today, namely: "How Does This Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus Function"? How does it operate? How does it bring man to the "freedom from sin in Christ Jesus"? There must be a way! All law must function in some way to bring about the desired results intended. Is it possible that the Lord has given so great a law and failed to show us how perfectly it works in bringing about this "freedom of man from the death of sin"? Is it possible that He has given it in such a confused state that man can't understand the correct manner of its operation or function? Here the eternal destiny of man is at stake. Has He so distorted this most vital law that man is left in a maze of bewilderment, frantically, hopelessly striving to learn how to comply with this law that he may be freed from that law that makes death the inevitable penalty for sin? Has the Lord deliberately confused the minds of men by authorizing all these conflicting doctrines that are in the world; by setting up these hundreds of churches, all differing, all teaching conflicting doctrines? Is this what He means by "the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus" that "frees us from the law of sin and death"? No, my good people, some one has just missed the truth of how this new law functions in "freeing man from the curse of spiritual death." Somewhere somebody has introduced a group of counterfeit laws and when such is done men are still left under the curse of this "law of sin and death." This we must know!

—After His Death —

If you will get your Bibles and follow with me, I shall come to this side of the death of Christ; this side of the Cross of Calvary when Christ nailed to the cross the old law and took it out of the way. I shall come to the time when His testament became effective by which men are to find "freedom in Christ" from their past sins.

— To All The World —

In Matthew 28:18-20 Christ says "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." In Luke 24:46 Christ says "Thus it is written, and thus

it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye shall be witnesses of these things." In Mark 16:15,16 Christ says to His apostles "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. But he that believeth not shall be damned."

— Marching Orders to Freedom's Door —

Here we have Christ's marching orders to see that every creature in all the world is given an opportunity to be released from the curse of the "law of sin and death," that he might find "Freedom in Christ" from all his sins. Would any man eliminate the Great Commission of our Lord from the plan of saving the world from sin? Would any man dare rob this "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" of the Lord's own marching orders to every creature in every nation in all the world? Why is Christ so concerned that every creature in all the world hear this glorious gospel of salvation if it can't, through Jesus Christ, bring to man his "freedom from the law" that makes "death" the result of his sins? What good would be this marching order of Christ to every nation, if by it the nations cannot receive the freedom they must have, which freedom was not, nor could it be, found in the Patriarchal system, nor in the Law of Moses, yea that could not be found in the Ten Commandments?

— The Great Commission & The New Law —

That the Great Commission is the carrying out of this new law; that it is this "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" in operation cannot be denied; it cannot be refuted for in the Great Commission the people were promised two things, "remission of sins" and "salvation" in the "name of Christ." This is what the "law of the Spirit of life" was to do. When you, my friends, have obeyed the commands of your Lord as given in His world-wide commission to you, it is then you are saved and have remission of your sins; it is then you enter into that promise made to you by Christ; that you are freed from that law which held you captive unto death. Now by "walking after the Spirit and not after the flesh" as Paul declares in Romans 8:1-4 you remain "free from the law of sin and death"; you continue to have "freedom in Christ." "Freedom in Christ" does not mean you are licensed to do what you please, now that you are in Him and free. Freedom here does not mean that. You are now free from your past sins; you are free from this "law of sin and death"; you are free from the "law of Moses"; you are free from the "Ten Commandments" as such; you are free from the Jewish Sabbath; you are free from animal sacrifices. But remember this new law of freedom in Christ deals with the very thoughts and intents of your heart long before you may ever commit the acts and by it you have restrictions. Hence this law of freedom is conditional; if you would remain free Paul says you "must walk not after the

flesh but after the Spirit." He forbids us to use our liberty for that which is wrong even under this new law of "freedom in Christ," In Galatians 5:13 Paul says "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty — that is freedom; — only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." Your liberty is in serving the Lord in the spirit of Christian love: not after the flesh nor going back under the law. In Galatians 5:4 Paul declares "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye ARE FALLEN FROM GRACE." Yes, you may "fall from grace," though you are taught, "once in grace always in grace"; once "free always free." To remain free and in the grace of God you must continue to abide in this "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." If this you do, Christ by that law, frees you forever from this "law of sin and death." If you refuse to abide by this new law then you pay the penalty of sin, which is death, and this new law ceases to protect you. You must live by it and abide in it to remain free from this awful curse of spiritual death. This you must never forget!

— Examples of Operation —

I now present to you the examples of this "law of life" in operation! Christ had commanded the apostles to "tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high," Luke 24:49. He had promised to send the Spirit to guide them into all truth and bring to their remembrance that which He had taught them, John, chapters 14 to 16. They now retire to the city as commanded, awaiting the coming of the Spirit to guide them into the revelation of this new law by Christ Jesus, Acts, chapters one and two. The Spirit comes, Acts 2:1-4. They begin to speak as the Spirit directs them, Acts 2:4. The crowd hears the apostles speaking and "every man heard them speak in his own language," verse 6. Peter told them of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ; of His ascension to the Father and His having sat down at the right of God on David's throne. He told them that this Jesus whom they had crucified God and made Him both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this they asked, "men and brethren, what shall we do?" and Peter replied, "repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Verse 41 says, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." In verse 44 these were called "believers" and in verse 47 they were said to be "saved" and the "Lord added them to the church." Question, Were these freed from the law of sin and death? Did these receive actual forgiveness of sins? Were they washed in the blood of Christ? Were they "free in Christ Jesus"? Was this "freedom in Christ"? My friends here is the first account of this "law of the Spirit of life in Jesus" in action. Here is the first time the Great Commission was ever put into practice. Here men received remission of sins, not by the blood of animals, but by the precious blood of

Christ. These had to believe in this Christ; they had to repent of their sins, and believing Jesus to be the Christ, God's Son, they were baptized in His name FOR the REMISSION OF SINS. This new law, this "law of life in Christ" was to bring them justification; it was to bring them freedom from sins; it was to free them from that dreadful curse of the "law of sin and death" that had been hanging over them for four thousand years. Here for the first time in all the history of mankind, men were actually finding freedom from this curse of death for sins. Christ had become that "Curse for them." He had become their sacrifice for sin; He had taken upon Him the sins of mankind and as their advocate, their mediator, and high priest is now making reconciliation for their sins, a thing that could never have been done under the Law of Moses, not even by the Ten Commandments, for they never had the blood of Christ as a cleansing fountain for sins. Accuse us of believing in the water to wash away sins! Accuse us of denying the power of the blood of Christ! No, my friends, but we know how to reach the blood of Christ through this new law, the Great Commission of our Lord. We must obey what it commands or die under the "curse of death for sin." These in Acts 2, who believed, repented, and were baptized for the remission of sins, as we teach you to do today, were said to be saved, to have remission of sins, to be believers, and the Lord added them to His church. What more can one ask? What more can one expect of the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" than is accomplished here? This churches of Christ believe and teach. It must be right!

— Acts, Chapters 8-9-10-16-18-19 —

Now let me take you hurriedly through the conversions of the Acts of the Apostles. In Acts 8:12 they "believed and were baptized," men and women — no babies. In Acts 8:29-40 is the record of the conversion of the Eunuch. Read it today. In verse 36 the eunuch asked, "See, here is water, what hindereth me to be baptized?" and Philip said "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest" and he answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" and they went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch and Philip baptized him. Here the eunuch believed and was baptized just as Christ commanded in Mark 16:15-16. In Acts, chapters 9 and 22 is recorded the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. The record shows that he believed, repented and was commanded to "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." All of them, "baptized every time"! In Acts chapter ten is the story of the conversion of Cornelius, the Gentile. Acts 10 verses 43 through 48 shows conclusively that he and his household were required to believe and be baptized. In Acts 11:18 we find they also had to repent for says the record "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." The Gentiles were required to believe, repent, and they were baptized in the name of the Lord also.

YOU MAY HEAR THE HERALD OF TRUTH OVER THESE STATIONS

City	Station	KC	Time	City	Station	KC	Time	City	Station	KC	Time
AFRICA: Fr. Morocco	AFRS			IOWA: Sioux City	KSCJ	1360	10:30 p.m.	Tulsa	KTUL	1430	8:30 a.m.
ALASKA: Anchorage	KFQD	730		KNTKY: Hopkinsville	WKOA	1230	7:15 a.m.	Wewoka	KWSH	1260	1:30 p.m.
Fairbanks	KFRB	900	5:30 p.m.	Mayfield	WKIM	1050	2:30 p.m.	ORGEON: Coquille	KWRO	1450	1:30 p.m.
ALABAMA: Anniston	WHMA	1450	1:00 p.m.	LA: New Iberia	KANE	1240	1:30 p.m.	Redmond	KJUN	1240	3:30 p.m.
Auburn	WAUD	1230	1:30 p.m.	Monroe	KMLB	1440	10:00 p.m.	PA.: Johnstown	WCRO	1230	8:00 a.m.
Calera	WBYE	1370	9:30 a.m.	Shreveport	KRMD	1340	1:30 p.m.	Phillipsburg	WPHB	1260	9:00 a.m.
Clanton	WKLF	980		MAINE: Bangor	WABI	910	9:00 p.m.	State College	WMAJ	1450	9:00 a.m.
Cullman	WKDL	1340	8:00 a.m.	Portland	WPOR	1490	11:00 a.m.	Wilkes-Barre	WILK	980	7:30 a.m.
Dothan	WOOF	560	12:15 p.m.	MD.: Hagerstown	WJEJ	1240	2:30 p.m.	PHILIPPINE ISL.: Manila	DZPI	800	8:00 a.m.
Flomaton	WTCB	990	8:30 a.m.	MASS.: Newburyport	WNAP	1470	1:30 p.m.	S. CAR.: Charleston	WHAN	1340	2:30 p.m.
Florence	WOWL	1240	1:00 p.m.	MICHIGAN: Bay City	WBCM	1440	2:30 p.m.	Columbia	WCOS	1400	7:30 p.m.
Huntsville	WHBS	1550	7:15 a.m.	Detroit	WXYZ	1270	5:30 p.m.	Florence	WJMX	970	2:30 p.m.
Montgomery	WAPX	1600	1:30 p.m.	Flint	WTAC	600	9:00 a.m.	Sumter	WSSC	1240	2:30 p.m.
Talladega	WHTB	1240	7:30 p.m.	Ludington	WKLA	1450	1:30 p.m.	TENN: Centerville	WHLF	1570	7:30 a.m.
			(Saturday)	Muskegon	WKBZ	850	6:30 p.m.	Jackson	WTJS	1390	6:00 p.m.
ARIZONA: Flagstaff	KCLS	1360	8:00 a.m.	Port Huron	WTHH	1380	1:30 p.m.	Johnson City	WETB	790	1:30 p.m.
Show Low	KVWM	1050	4:30 p.m.	MINNESOTA: Mankato	KTOE	1420	6:30 p.m.	Knoxville	WBIR	1240	5:00 p.m.
Bisbee	KSUN	1260	9:00 a.m.	Montevideo	KDMA	1450	2:00 p.m.	McMinnville	WBMC	960	1:30 p.m.
ARKANSAS: El Dorado	KDMS	1290	1:00 p.m.	MISS.: Centerville	WGLC	1580	8:00 a.m.	Memphis	WJHM	1340	6:45 p.m.
Fort Smith	KFSA	950	9:00 p.m.	Jackson	WJDX	620	8:30 p.m.	Nashville	WSIX	980	4:30 p.m.
Little Rock	KLRA	1010	7:05 p.m.	Laurel	WLAU	1490	8:30 p.m.	Oak Ridge	WOKE	1290	9:00 a.m.
McGehee	KVSA	1220	9:00 a.m.	McComb	WHNY	1250	1:30 p.m.	Lexington	WDXL	1490	1:00 p.m.
Paragould	KDRS	1490	7:00 p.m.	MO.: Cape Girardeau	KFVS	960	8:30 p.m.	TEXAS: Abilene	KRBC	1470	8:15 a.m.
			(Saturday)	Kansas City	KCMO	810	8:30 a.m.	Beaumont	KFDM	560	1:30 p.m.
Springdale	KBRS	1340	6:00 p.m.	Poplar Bluff	KWOC	930	4:30 p.m.	Big Spring	KBST	1490	1:30 p.m.
BERMUDA: Pembroke	ZBM	1235	1:30 p.m.	Rolla	KTRR	1490	8:45 a.m.	Corpus Christi	KEYS	1440	8:00 a.m.
CALIFORNIA: Alturas	KCNO	570	9:30 a.m.	Salem	KSMO	1340	8:30 p.m.	Dallas	WFAA	570	1:30 p.m.
Blythe	KYOR	1450		Springfield	KWTO	560	1:30 p.m.	Fort Worth	WBAP	570	1:30 p.m.
Indio	KREO	1400		MONTANA: Bozeman	KBMN	1450	7:45 a.m.	Graham	KSWA	1330	4:30 p.m.
Los Angeles	KABC	790	3:30 p.m.	NEBRASKA: O'Neill	KVHC	1400		Longview	KFRO	1370	1:30 p.m.
Porterville	KTIP	1450	3:30 p.m.	Scottsbluff	KNEB	960	8:00 a.m.	Midland	KCRS	550	1:30 p.m.
San Francisco	KGO	810	3:30 p.m.	N. MEX.: Las Vegas	KFUN	1230	4:30 p.m.	Perryton	KEYE	1400	8:15 a.m.
CANADA: Toronto	CKEY	580	9:15 a.m.	Raton	KRTN	1400	4:30 p.m.	San Angelo	KGKL	960	1:30 p.m.
Winnipeg	CKY	580	11:30 p.m.	NEW YORK: Massena	WMSA	1340	10:00 a.m.	San Antonio	KMAC	630	11:30 a.m.
Weyburn, Sask.	CFSL			New York	WABC	770	2:30 p.m.	UTAH: Provo	KIXX		
CANAL ZONE: Panama	HOL	760	6:00 p.m.	Poughkeepsie	WKIP	1450	1:00 p.m.	VA.: Fredericksburg	WFVA	1230	12:30 p.m.
			(Saturday)	Rochester	WJET	1280	10:30 p.m.	WASHINGTON: Seattle	KVI	570	4:00 p.m.
COLORADO: Denver	KOSI	630	8:30 a.m.	N. CAR.: Asheville	WLOS	1380	2:30 p.m.	Walla Walla	KTEL	1490	3:30 p.m.
FLORIDA: Gainesville	WGGG	1230	2:30 p.m.	Durham	WTKI	1310	2:00 p.m.	Omak	KOMW	680	9:15 a.m.
Jacksonville	WZOK	1320	9:00 a.m.	Fayetteville	WFLB	1490	2:30 p.m.	Wenatchee	KUEN	1410	10:15 a.m.
Miami	WMIE	560	5:30 p.m.	N. DAKOTA: Fargo	KFGO	790	1:30 p.m.	W. VA.: New Martinsville	WETZ	1330	1:00 p.m.
Milton	WEBY	1330	2:00 p.m.	Grand Forks	KILO	1060	1:00 p.m.	Parkersburg	WCOM	1230	5:30 p.m.
Tampa-St. Ptrsbrg	WSUN	620	2:30 p.m.	OHIO: East Liverpool	WOHI	1490	6:30 p.m.	Wheeling	WKWK	1400	9:00 p.m.
Ft. Walton Beach	WFBS	950	12:30 p.m.	Youngstown	WBBW	1240	8:30 a.m.	WISCONSIN: Green Bay	WDUZ	1400	1:30 p.m.
GEORGIA: Albany	WALB	1500	2:30 p.m.	Toledo	WSPD	1370	9:30 a.m.	La Crosse	WKTY	580	10:00 p.m.
Brunswick	WGIG	1440	6:30 p.m.	OKLAHOMA: Ardmore	KVSO	1240	1:30 p.m.	Madison	WIBA	1330	8:00 a.m.
Macon	WNEX	1400	2:30 p.m.	Elk City	KASA	1240	1:30 p.m.	Oshkosh	WOSH	1490	1:30 p.m.
Valdosta	WGOV	950	2:30 p.m.	Enid	KCRC	1390	1:30 p.m.	Wausau	WSAU	1400	9:00 a.m.
Rome	WLAQ	1410	2:30 p.m.	Lawton	KWSO	1380	4:30 p.m.	WYOMING: Casper	KSPR	1470	9:15 p.m.
HAWAII: Honolulu	KAIM	870	9:30 a.m.	Muskogee	KBIX	1490	1:30 p.m.	Cheyenne	KFBC	710	4:30 p.m.
IDAHO: Idaho Falls	KID	590	8:00 a.m.					Douglas	KWIV	1050	
Jerome	KART	1400	8:30 a.m.					Thermopolis	KTHE	1240	5:00 p.m.
Rupert	KAYT	970									
ILLINOIS: Chicago	WLS	890	1:30 p.m.								
Macomb	WKAI	1510	9:15 a.m.								

This list not 100% correct due to frequent changes
All Times Are Sunday Unless Otherwise Indicated

In Acts 16 we have the recorded conversions of Lydia and the Jailor. They also had to believe and be baptized, Acts 16:15; Acts 16:33 and the jailor did it the same hour of the night. Again all were baptized. This was never evaded nor avoided. In Acts 18:8 Paul was in Corinth preaching the gospel, I Cor. 15:1-4. The record says "many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized." Last but not least, Paul was in Ephesus and in Acts 19:1-10 we find they gave up the baptism of John the Baptist, 12 men of them, and believing they were baptized in the name of the Lord.

— Conclusion —

As we conclude this lesson, I ask this question, What were these apostles, whom Paul called ambassadors for Christ in 2 Cor. 5:20, and Ananias and Philip sent by the Lord, doing as they went preaching? Were they presenting this new law of life or were they preaching a doctrine that kept the people bound to the "law of sin and death"? Were the people actually freed from their sins? Were they saved? Were they justified? Was this the "law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus" functioning that it, by Jesus Christ, might free the souls of men from that law that demanded death for sin? Answer these questions, you who would ridicule churches of Christ for asking men today to do as did these of whom we have just read. We know that they did that which was right. Do it now and you will be subject to that "law of the spirit of life in Christ" that frees men from the "law of sin and death." We are preaching the truth of this Book Divine. There is no answer to this lesson today. All who receive what these received during the days of the apostles must do what they did. This must be right. Here is what is meant by an "exclusive bound pattern." It can't be done in any other way. There are no dozen ways of being saved. These all had to "believe and be baptized" just as Christ commanded in His Great World Wide Commission in Mark 16:15-16. This is the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ" in action! This is "freedom in Christ" and those who live by this new law, when life is over and the resurrection is here, having walked all their days by this law of life; this law of liberty, Christ will confess their names to His Father, Rev. 3:5. Yes the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" has freed us from the "law of sin and death" which the "law of Moses" could not do in that it was weak through the flesh," Rom. 8:1-4. Do today what they did two thousand years ago and be saved. May God bless you is my prayer in the holy name of Christ.

IS CHRIST TO BLAME?

By E. R. HARPER

Radio Sermon No. 329

May 18, 1958

That our world today is in a state of religious confusion does not have to be proven; it is self-evident. Hundreds of churches in

America alone, all teaching conflicting doctrines; each claiming to present the truth; each claiming Christ is the author of what they are preaching to the world. Men by the thousands are rejecting all churches; all beliefs; declaring the Bible to be a book of contradictions. My lesson today, "Is Christ To Blame" I feel should be prayerfully and carefully considered. It is because of this confused state of mind in which so many find themselves as the direct result of this religious division that I have selected to discuss with you this issue today.

Conversion

Coming home to Abilene some time back, it was mine to engage in conversation with a very fine mother who was worried about her daughter's husband. The following is almost word for word what she said to me: She said, "Brother Harper, I am worried about my son-in-law. He is one of the finest young men I ever knew. When he was a boy he went to Sunday school and church, but now he doesn't go, neither does he want my daughter and her child to attend. He says it isn't necessary, that they can worship just as good at home and he wants them with him. She said she told him that he should not want to keep them at home. I told her that he had been taught from childhood that the church is nonessential; that you can be saved and never be a member of any church; that preachers had spoken lightly of the church by such remarks as "the church is not your saviour; you can't depend on your church membership to save you; no man can tell which one is the church the Lord built; that you can be saved at home by your radio; that you can worship God just as acceptably at home as at church." Many other such derogatory remarks concerning the institution for which our Saviour died have been made. Young people are made to believe them. Her daughter's husband was just carrying out his religious teaching. This she had never considered; in fact she had never thought of it that way. She was blaming the boy when she should have blamed the people who so taught him. Millions remain at home on Sunday and do not attend the services of any religious organization. Maybe you who are listening just now are one of that number, all because the church has been so belittled by such statements as above.

Really Why Go?

When you come to think of it, why should he go to any certain church, or to any church at all if the church is nonessential; if you can worship God as well every day and Sunday too at home? Why can't those people get together and worship the Lord without any church if what we are taught concerning the church be true? How do you expect the world to become "church conscious" when all over this nation today in pulpits, over radio, and on television, scores of men will be attacking us as false teachers, as men trying to save ourselves by our church membership, and telling your sons and daughters they do not need to be in any church to be saved; that

they can worship God as acceptably out of the church as at the services of the Lord with the people of the church?

Is Christ To Blame?

Just such worried hearts as was this good mother of whom I spoke is why I have selected this subject, "Is Christ To Blame?" I ask you now honestly, Is Christ to blame for this young man not attending church services and wanting his family to stay with him? Is Christ to blame for these millions who are at home today, out fishing, playing golf, visiting or out on picnics, with never a thought of being with the Lord's people worshiping and serving their Master? Is Christ to bear the blame for the loss of these millions who refuse to worship? Who fail to carry their children to Bible study and by so doing contribute to the juvenile problems before us today? Suppose every pulpit today should decide to tell the people just what the Bible says about the church; That the Lord is its builder, Matt. 16:18; that He defied the gates of hell to give the church to us, Matt. 16:18; that because of His great love for the church He gave Himself for it, Eph. 5:22-27; that because of its worth to us He bought the church with His own precious blood that we might have membership in such an institution, Acts 20:28, that the church is the "house of God," His "family," I Tim. 3:15. I Peter 4:16-18; that the church is the Lamb's bride, His wife, John 3:27-30; Romans 7:1-4; I Cor. 11:2; Revelation 21:9; Eph. 5:22-33; last but not least suppose they would explain to them what Paul meant in Eph. 5:27 where he says it is the "church" that is to be "presented unto Christ"? Suppose in every pulpit today in this nation of ours over every radio and television station men were teaching the people that the church the Lord built is that of which He is the "Saviour," Eph. 5:23; that the church is therefore the saved of this earth and for the church, His bride, His wife, He is returning to present her to Himself without spot or blemish, and this being true, fathers and mothers should become members not of just some church, but of the one the Lord is coming to receive unto Himself in the last great day. Men and women would then begin to respect the church and the millions who are nothing religiously today, if they wished to be certain of their salvation and that of their families, would obey the gospel of Christ and let the Lord add them to His church, Acts 2:47; I Cor. 12:18. Suppose those of you who are listening to me now believed the above things concerning the church. Would you not have gone with your children to Bible study today and remained for worship? Again I ask, "Is Christ to blame for all this"? If He isn't then WHO IS? One thing of which I am certain — it is not the preachers of the churches of Christ in our land for we believe and teach the above things concerning the church. We teach the people the church is the "saved of this earth"; that the church is the "family of God on earth"; that the Lord is the "Saviour of the body, the church"; that the church is "His bride"; and that He is "returning for the church" to "present her to himself" a "glorious church" and we are begging all of you to find the way into that church. **THIS CAN'T BE WRONG!**

We also teach our people they must be "faithful unto death," "not forsaking the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is," Rev. 2:10 and Heb. 10:25. Since Christ is not to blame for people remaining out of the church and away from worshiping Him on the Lord's day; since we of the church of Christ are not to blame, then I press the question, "who IS to blame?"

Our World Today

Looking at our world today! Hundreds of denominations, all differing; each one saying, The Lord is directing me; the preachers of each claiming the Holy Spirit has anointed them to preach these conflicting doctrines of these churches. Godless Communism claiming half the world; millions of the other half being brought to bow before gods and images made by the hand of man; a fight unto death to unite church and state over the world with the church in absolute control. Is Christ to blame for all this? Let us remain free men to worship as we please. To do this we must keep Communism from our doors and the freedom of our state from the domination of any church. Christianity does not propagate itself by force. Again I press the question, Is Christ to blame for all this? If not, then WHO IS?

What Is Our Trouble?

It shall now be my happy privilege to come to the defense of the Christ and to prove to you that He is not the author of this confusion existing in our world today. In I Cor. 14:33 Paul says this, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." These churches of the saints, at that time, were all of the same faith and order. There were no conflicting denominations in existence! It was this same writer who in I Cor. 1:10 said to this same church, which church was about to have trouble and become divided over men, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." This verse is positively a death blow to all attempted justification of such confusion as exists among us today. Christ is not the author of it and it is contrary to every principle of true Christianity. In this same letter, verse 13 Paul asked them, "Is Christ divided?" The strength of this argument is, If Christ be not divided then you who claim to follow Him cannot be divided. This writer also said in Eph. 4:4-6 "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Here we find the same number of bodies, that is churches, as there are Spirits, as there are Lords, or as there are Gods. We know what "one Lord"; what "one Spirit"; and what "one God" means. This same chapter and the same verse says "one body" and Paul, the writer, says this body is the church, Eph. 1:22-23. We must conclude therefore there is just "one church" and Paul commanded this church to all speak the "same thing" and that there be

"no division among them." It was to this same church he said in I Cor. 12:20: There is "but one body." Now where we find two or more different, conflicting bodies or churches, we must know at once that they cannot all be this "one" body, this one church. They could, by chance, all be wrong, but one thing certain if there be "but one church" as the Bible plainly says, they could not all be that one else God is made the author of religious confusion and the Bible tells us plainly as just read that "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." Something must be wrong and the wrong is not with God; it must be with man. Man has violated this admonition and has become divided; has ceased to speak the same thing; is no longer of the same mind and of the same judgment, and parties and divisions have arisen as the result of such. It violates the prayer of the Lord in John 17:21 where Christ prayed "That they all be one as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that—remember this now—that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." He knew that divided as so-called Christianity is, the world would grope its way in religious darkness and the ugly head of infidelity would rear itself in our midst and cause to be damned the souls of millions of confused peoples of this world.

The Great Question

Now the great question is: How may we reproduce primitive Christianity, such as they enjoyed during the days of the inspired apostles? How may we reproduce the kingdom of our Lord, the church He built? In the language of Jeremiah, as found in chapter 8 and verse 22, "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" I ask today, Is there no balm for us? Is there no physician today who can bring back to the people this beautiful unity of the people of God that this spirit of Christianity may be recovered? Christ our Physician is not the cause of this terrible malady that exists among us today. This division in the religious world that is blighting the souls of millions and will be the cause of their damnation, is not the result of a failure upon the part of our Great Physician above, but it is our own fault and He is the only remedy for our ills.

As I look about us and see the confused state of the hearts of so many, I think of the words of another great prophet of God when before king Artaxerxes he stood with a countenance so sad that the king asked him, "Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? This is nothing else but sorrow of heart." Then Nehemiah answered in the words that filled my heart today. He said, "Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire." It was then Nehemiah, the weeping prophet, said to the king, "Send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchre, that I may build it." Now just as his heart longed for the city of his fathers to be rebuilt, and just as his heart wept for the city, just so our hearts weep today as we long to see, all over the world the city of our

God — the church of the Lord — the kingdom of Jesus Christ, rebuilt in every hamlet, in every city and in every nation on the earth. I believe it can be done, we believe it is being done and we believe we know the only solution to its accomplishment. We believe therefore that the church as it was during the days of the apostles has been reproduced and that we are preaching and presenting to the world Christianity in its purity; that Christianity that can unite the world in peace and by such shall become the one hope in the world today against all isms, against all tyrannical despots, either in civil or religious affairs.

The Principle Introduced

This is so simple and so easily done that the world cannot believe it possible. So confused as our world is because of so much division and so many false claims of miraculous powers, divine revelations, and so-called authoritative church traditions, it becomes next to impossible for the beautiful truth of God's laws of reproduction to be believed and accepted in the field of religious truths. Stand with me just now in the morning of time when God created the heavens and the earth and all things upon the earth, in the sea and in the air and hear Him say in Genesis, chapter 1, verses 11-12, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself after his kind: and God saw that it was good." Here God's law is that every seed shall yield fruit after its kind. Paul in I Cor. 15:37-38 says, "That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to EVERY SEED HIS OWN BODY." The law of God given in the beginning of time is further emphasized by Paul in Galatians 6:7 as the Spirit guided him to say. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, THAT shall he also reap." You reap the kind of harvest that lies dormant, possibly, but ever living in the seed you planted. This is the law of God and to change that law would be to mock God. The kind of seed one sows determines always the kind of harvest he reaps. If the seed is pure, unmixed with any foreign element it will produce the same kind of fruit as when first planted or sown. If not the law of God "that every seed bring forth after its own kind" has then been mocked. Paul's statement becomes an untruth, a falsehood for then you would have man not reaping what he sows.

The Word Of God The Seed Of The Kingdom

In my next lesson I shall show you exactly how the kingdom of heaven is reproduced today—I shall show you that kingdom has a seed by which it is propagated just as the animal kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, and the human race are all produced or propagated. I shall show you the same law both adheres and inheres in the re-

production of the Lord's kingdom by its seed as that found in Genesis chapter 1 and I Cor. 15:38. I shall show you that the planting of this "seed of the kingdom" which Luke 8 says is the "word of God" is the only law by which the true and primitive way of Christianity may be reproduced in our generation. I shall show you that this "seed of the kingdom" is pure and being pure it must always produce exactly the same kind of kingdom; that the Christianity it produces cannot be a divided, contradictory system of religions as we have today. I shall establish the fact that whatever this "seed of the kingdom" produces the first time it is planted in the hearts of men; that whatever church it formed the first time it was sown; whatever the nature of the kingdom produced by the first planting of this "seed," that it will always be the exact duplicate of that first fruit. I shall also show you that churches of Christ are sowing the exact seed sown or planted in men's heart during the days of the apostles. I promise you this can be done. But today will you not receive this seed into your heart letting it produce faith, repentance, confession of Christ and the completion of baptism for the remission of your sins? May the Lord bless you is my prayer in His holy name.

WHAT SEED DID YOU PLANT?

By E. R. HARPER

Radio Sermon No. 330

May 25, 1958

Today I am discussing with you the subject "Is Christ to Blame?" along with the question "What Seed Did You Plant?". I do not believe Christ can be blamed for all the confusion we have today in the religious world for He prayed that we "all be one as he and the Father are one, that the world may believe the Father sent him," John 17:20-21. I promise to show you how the kingdom of our Lord may be reproduced today; how we may reproduce the true church; how New Testament Christianity may be given to the world today. It could be done by planting or sowing the "seed of the kingdom" as spoken by our Lord in Luke, chapter 8. It is an established and fundamental truth that every seed must bring forth after its kind, Genesis chapter 1, and that God cannot be mocked for "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" Galatians 6:7.

Word Of God—Seed of Kingdom

Today I am asking this question, "What Seed Did You Sow?". In Luke chapter 8, verses 4 through 15 we have the Parable of the Sower. Christ said "A sower went forth to sow his seed." He said "some fell by the wayside; some fell on a rock; some fell among thorns; but some fell on good ground." His disciples asked him saying, "What might this parable be?" Now listen carefully to the Lord's answer to them. "And he said, Unto you it is given to know the

mysteries of the KINGDOM OF GOD: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not hear. Now the parable is this: (still quoting our Master) The seed IS THE WORD OF GOD. Those by the wayside are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." He explains the meaning of each, but the last of them was this, "But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." This was the only one of the four in which we find the "seed planted" bringing forth fruit to perfection. The others either failed to produce or died before bearing and were lost. Here is another example of a believer being lost.

An Explanation

In this we find the word of God, which He calls the "seed of the kingdom" was planted in the hearts of the hearers and once planted it was to germinate in that heart and bring forth fruit unto salvation and in so doing the kingdom of God would continue to be propagated or established wherever that same seed was sown in the hearts of men and women. But remember one thing: It was only the pure "word of God" that brought this about; nothing else could!

Pure Seed

It shall now be my happy pleasure to show you that this "seed"; this "word of God" is pure and being pure, unmixed with the doctrines of men, it must produce after its kind, each and every time it is sown in our hearts.

In Psalms 19:7-8 David says "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the COMMANDMENT of the Lord is PURE, enlightening the eyes." In Psalms 119:140 David says "Thy word is VERY PURE: therefore thy servant loveth it." You are ready to ask, Brother Harper, just how pure IS the word of the Lord? Could it not be contaminated as it comes from God? Is there no way for the Spirit to make a mistake? Let David answer us as to just how pure the word of the Lord is. In Psalms 12:6 he says "The words of the Lord are PURE WORDS: AS SILVER TRIED IN A FURNACE OF EARTH, PURIFIED SEVEN TIMES." Then he says "Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt PRESERVE THEM from this GENERATION FOR EVER." Here we find that when God sends His words to us He sends them pure without corruption. This being true they will, without fail, "bring forth after their kind" every time. What the "word of God" this "seed of the kingdom" makes the first time it is planted, it shall be forced to make, just that, every time it is planted, for pure seed refined as is the word of God cannot make different, conflicting plants or doctrines. This I pray you may never forget.

That you may see this principle runs true all throughout the Bible I now invite your attention to the words of our Master in John 6:63

where He says "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." Since He refers to them as "spirit and as life" there must be some law inherent in his word, this seed of the kingdom, that is capable of producing life. In this same connection Peter said to the Lord, in verse 68 "thou has the words of ETERNAL LIFE." None but Christ possesses words of such power that they can give to man "eternal life." They must therefore be pure and very pure, refined as the silver of Psalms 12.

Paul to the Philippian brethren in chapter 2, verses 15 through 16 says "That ye be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain." Here he admonishes them to "hold forth this word of life." James in chapter 1, verse 21 says "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls; Be ye DOERS of the WORD and not hearers only." Not only is the word of God spoken of as being able to give you life, and to save your souls, it is also that medium by which our souls are converted, says David in Psalms 12:6 and by which we are "born again." Peter in I Peter 1:23 says "Being BORN AGAIN, not of corruptible seed, but of INCORRUPTIBLE, by the WORD OF GOD, which liveth and abideth forever." Here this word is said to be "incorruptible"; that it shall "live and abide forever." A corruptible word could not produce this "life"; this "salvation"; this "conversion"; this "new birth." It takes the "pure, incorruptible seed," this word of God that shall not be destroyed, to bring about the reproduction of primitive Christianity; the establishment of the true church; and the building of that "kingdom that shall stand forever," Dan. 2:44.

But I cannot close this discussion of the "pure word of God" without hearing John on the Isle of Patmos saying in Revelation 6:9 "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain FOR THE WORD OF GOD, and for the testimony which they held" and then in chapter 14 and verses 12 through 13, this grand apostle of the Lord, now banished on this lonely isle for the "word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ," (Rev. 1:9) says of them, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD and the FAITH of Jesus, And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

My dear friends, it must be evident to us by now that this pure "word of God" which Christ called the "seed of the kingdom" must be planted in the hearts of men if ever we have in this world the "kingdom of God"; if ever the souls of men are to be saved. Nothing

else can bring this about. It must be the "pure word of God"; it must not be corrupted by the doctrines of men for this corruption would cause the fruit produced by this corrupted seed to be something other than the "kingdom of God" or the "salvation of the souls of men." Hence the title of our subject today, "What Seed Did You Sow?" Friends, seriously would the "pure word of God" alone planted in the hearts of men make what you are today? Would it? If so, What Kind of Seed Did the Others Sow that produced an entirely different kind of church, with a radically different doctrine from that of the one to which you belong? Can you explain this? You who are my fellow preachers listening to me, can you explain how this could be if all had planted the "pure seed of the kingdom"? Somewhere someone has planted the wrong seed for when the "seeds—the doctrines" that are now being planted in the hearts of men come up, they produce conflicting, opposing, antagonistic doctrines and institutions. This, all can readily see, but who is willing to sit prayerfully, with this "seed of the kingdom," this "word of God" and see if the institutions to which he belongs or the doctrine he has espoused, be the result of the planting of this "word of God" only or if it is the result of a "corrupted seed" something beyond and in addition to the word of God, planted in his heart? This is vital since only the "pure word of God" is able to save your soul or to reproduce this "kingdom."

The Seed The Gospel

I shall now show you that this seed is the gospel of Christ. In I Peter 1:25 the apostle plainly identifies this word as he says "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And THIS IS the word which by the GOSPEL is preached unto you." No wonder Christ said to His apostles in Mark 16:15, "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." This gospel is that "pure word of God"; this "seed of the kingdom." Now when man corrupts the gospel, he corrupts this seed. When he corrupts this seed, he destroys primitive Christianity and builds another kingdom; establishes another church, for true Christianity; the true church; and the true kingdom must be the result of sowing and planting this "pure word of God" which is able to "save your soul," and by which the "kingdom of God" is established on earth. This is the word of God! This is the truth that shall stand like the Rock of Ages! It has stood all these centuries past; it shall stand until the end of time. Preaching just this "pure word of God" is why churches of Christ today are unafraid and walk humbly amidst the conflicting claims of the world, unchallenged by even the learned of this earth. The principles just set forth in this lesson have to be right! The Lord said in John 8:32, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Error, doctrines of men, or a perverted gospel can never make you free but will continue to hold you in your sins and because you may believe this error to be the truth, this perverted gospel may hold you bound in your sins until death.

Can It Be Perverted?

But says one, It doesn't make any difference what you believe just so you are honest. This will be the cause of as many souls being lost in the day of judgment as any error that blinds the hearts of men today. Listen to Paul as he says in Galatians 1:6-7 "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another but there be some that trouble you, and would PERVERT the gospel of Christ." Here Paul shows that the "gospel of Christ" may be perverted. Just what happens if it be perverted? Is there any danger? Hear him in verses 8-9, "But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." So long as such passages live in your Bible, it DOES make a difference what you believe!

Christ says in Matthew 15:8-9 "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in VAIN they do worship me." Just how, Lord, do they worship you in vain? Hear the next part of this verse, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." You must know if the doctrine you have espoused is this "pure word of God" or if it is a "perverted gospel" or if the things you have done are the "commandments of men" and not the commandments of God. It does make a difference! You must know "what kind of seed you sow." John, in 2 John verse 9 says "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

Here he shows plainly the tragic result of those who allow themselves to be taken in by these false doctrines. They too shall be lost. Yes, it makes a difference in the "kind of seed you sow."

Nature Proves This!

Let me now take you into the realm of nature and see this principle at work. Spring has come; farmers have planted their seeds; they are now up. You take me into a field of cotton, or of corn, maybe wheat, and I ask you, What kind of seed did you sow here? You will reply, if in the cotton field, I planted cotton seed; if in the corn field you would answer corn seed, or if we go to the beautiful wheat field you would answer, I sowed wheat in this field. Just what would you think of the farmer were he to answer, Mr. Harper, I tell you how I do this, I just went out into the field and just sowed wheat seed in all these fields and from that one seed came up all these different crops; they all came from the same seed. You would know there is something wrong with the farmer. Again, we are to have company and the wife says, I need some cucumbers, squash, tomatoes, beans, and then she decides also to have pumpkin pie. She

sends me out to gather it all in and as I start I go to the watermelon patch. She asks me, Where are you going? and I tell her, I am going to the watermelon patch to get what you ask for. Then she replies, You planted watermelon seed out there; you can't get what I want off that vine. What would you think of me were I to say to her, Honey, it doesn't make any difference where you go to get this for it comes from the same seed and is all going to the same place, to feed the company? We all know if you plant pure watermelon seeds you will gather nothing but watermelons. In the vegetable world we know where to go to get what we want for every seed produces after its own kind. Pure pumpkin seeds do not produce watermelons, cucumbers nor tomatoes. They are all different and each must come from its own seed. But in the field of religion many close their eyes to this vital truth and just say "it makes no difference what you believe nor to what church you belong." Now, why? Because say they "It all comes from the Bible, this pure word of God, the seed of His kingdom." They will tell you, "We all get it from the same book and we are all going to the same place." Now why can't we see that the same principle inheres in the word of God, which is the "seed of His kingdom" to produce the kind of fruit God wants? Why can't we see that different churches; different doctrines; different religions are the result of the sowing of different seeds; different doctrines. Each doctrine produces its own kind of religion; its own kind of church and we know they are all different. Can't we see, if we sowed or planted nothing but the "pure word of God; this seed of His kingdom." It would have to produce the same thing each time?

Rooted Up

I beg of you as I close to listen to our Saviour's words in Matt. 15:10:14. This is the chapter where He warned them against teaching "for doctrines the commandments of men." His disciples say to Him "Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." The Father's plant comes from His pure seed sown and every plant, that the Father did not plant shall be rooted up. My friends. He is here speaking of "plants formed by false doctrines." Yes, it matters in religion "What Kind of Seed you Sow." In my next lesson I shall take this "pure seed of the kingdom; the word of God" and show you how impossible it is for all this religious confusion we have to come from God's word. I shall be able to show you what is wrong and last I shall show you what the "pure word of God," His "seed" produces every time it is planted. Do not miss our next in this series.

Will you not receive into your heart this word of God today and as the Lord commands in Mark 16:16 "believe and be baptized?" May God bless you is my prayer in the blessed name of Jesus.

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